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## **60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIETY OF MEDICAL BIOCHEMISTS OF SERBIA AND 11<sup>th</sup> EFLM SYMPOSIUM FOR BALKAN REGION**

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The Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (SMBS) celebrated this year, on May 14 and 15, its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It was marked with the organization, for the 11<sup>th</sup> time, of the EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region. This year's Symposium, entitled »Laboratory Medicine Specialist Focuses on the Patients Well-being«, was organized by SMBS, EFLM and Department of Medical Biochemistry of the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Pharmacy, and under the auspices of IFCC, Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF), Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and Ministry of Health of Republic of Serbia. During the two day Symposium, the participants had a chance to hear about the current hot topics concerning the laboratory medicine profession today from the leading European experts in this field – Prof. Mauro Panteghini, Prof. Simone Zérah, Dr Gilbert Wieringa, Dr Ian D. Watson, Dr Wytze Oosterhuis, Prof. Elizabeta Topić, Dr Wim Huisman, and Prof. Ana-Maria Šimundić; as well as about the situation in training of specialists in laboratory medicine, accreditation and key processes quality indicators in Serbian medical laboratories from Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh and Dr Zorica Šumarac. The talks were about the role of laboratory medicine specialists in verification of in vitro medical diagnostics metrological traceability, implementation and the transposition of the Directive on the professional qualifications, common training frameworks for specialists in laboratory medicine, common values in the liberal professions in Europe, laboratory medicine in the EU, the implementation of continuous professional development, present situation on accreditation in Europe, and pre-analytical phase quality management. This year's round table discussion, which finalized the Symposium, was exceptionally vibrant. It was hosted by students of medical biochemistry from the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, gathered in the »Team of Medical Biochemists«. After the short pres-

entation they had made on their extracurricular activities, they initiated a discussion with (and among) the distinguished lecturers about the topic of the utmost interest to these enthusiastic young people, and that is, as they defined it, what it takes to become a lab hero.

After the completion of the Symposium sessions, the Ceremony of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the SMBS celebration began. The ceremony was opened by the Infinity Quintet and their inspiring performance of popular pieces by Guns'n'Roses, Whitesnake, Scorpions, in classical adaptation for a string quintet, symbolizing the continuity of the Society's work during the past 60 years and its constant change and advancement according to the demands of the actual time. Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, the Executive Director of the SMBS, reminded us briefly of the beginnings and development of medical biochemistry in Serbia, from the middle ages on, as well as of the foundation of SMBS and its various activities. This was followed by photos from numerous events that SMBS patronized and organized during the last 60 years, which were included in the book »Serbian Medical Biochemistry in 21<sup>st</sup> Century – 70 years later«, published on this occasion by the SMBS. Many distinguished guests from Serbia and abroad were invited and responded to the summons, and they made the welcoming address to the gathering. The greatest honor to the SMBS was made with the attendance and addressing of Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Katherine of Serbia. Congratulations to the SMBS were delivered also by the IFCC President Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, EFLM President Prof. Mauro Panteghini, the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy University of Belgrade Prof. Zorica Vujić, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine University of Belgrade Prof. Nebojša Lalić, and the Director of the Chamber of Biochemists of Serbia Dr Slavica Cimbalević. Also, the President of the Croatian Society of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine Prof. Ana-

Maria Šimundić and Sonja Kuzmanovska, Representative of the Macedonian Society of Medical Biochemistry congratulated the Anniversary, and the letter from the Polish Society of Laboratory Diagnostics sent on this occasion was read. Regarding the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the SMBS, the President of the SMBS Dr Zorica Šumarac delivered the awards. The Honorary Diploma, the highest recognition of the SMBS, intended for the designated individuals for promoting clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine in Europe and globally, was handed to Prof. Simone Zérah. The highest award, the Charter, regarding the 60 years of existence and work, in appreciation and gratitude for the significant contribution to the work and development of the SMBS, was delivered to IFCC and EFLM. As recognition and gratitude for significant contribution to the work of the SMBS, Diplomas and Acknowledgments were handed to 60 individuals and organizations. The special Honorary Diploma and Anniversary Logo were delivered to Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, the long-time President of the SMBS and present Executive Director, for her enormous contribution to the foundation and development of the SMBS and the profession of medical biochemistry in Serbia.

It is important to say that the formation of the professional association of medical biochemists in Serbia started more than 60 years ago. The Section for Medical Biochemistry of the Pharmaceutical Society of Serbia was founded in 1951, one year before the formation of IFCC (in 1952). Four years later, on the 6<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the Alliance of Pharmaceutical Societies of Yugoslavia, held in Split on 15 May 1955, the Section for Medical Biochemistry of the Alliance of Pharmaceutical Societies of Yugoslavia was founded. This Section was later renamed the Society for Medical Biochemistry within the Alliance, according to the resolution of the 16<sup>th</sup> Plenum, held 15 May 1965 in Banjaluka. In 1995, the Society of Medical Biochemists of Yugoslavia accepted this date, 15 May, as the Day of the Society, according to these historical facts. It is important to say that the Society

of Medical Biochemists of Yugoslavia soon became the 28<sup>th</sup> member of the IFCC, in May 1971.

Today, SMBS organizes congresses, biochemical days and seminars for continuous education of its members. Up-to-date 19 congresses and 20 seminars were held. As a member of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF), SMBS organized three BCLF congresses: 4<sup>th</sup> in Budva in 1996, 11<sup>th</sup> in Belgrade in 2003, and 20<sup>th</sup> also in Belgrade in 2012. Every year, SMBS organizes together with EFLM, and under the auspices of IFCC and BCLF, EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region which covers actual topics important for the promotion of the profession. Also, SMBS is the publisher of Journal of Medical Biochemistry, an international peer-reviewed journal.

Within SMBS two foundations are at work, »Professor Ivan Berkeš« and »Magistra Milica Marković«. Scientific Foundation »Professor Ivan Berkeš« was named after the distinguished teacher and expert in medical biochemistry in Serbia and former Yugoslavia. On the Annual Scientific Conference, dedicated to his life and work, the Foundation and SMBS award the best students of the Faculty of Pharmacy University of Belgrade, and the results of doctoral thesis of members of the SMBS are presented. The Foundation »Magistra Milica Marković« was founded in memory of the esteemed colleague and long-time member of SMBS, who left an indelible mark in the development of the medical biochemistry profession in Serbia. The Foundation awards medical biochemists for promotion of technological and organizational principles of work of clinical laboratories.

This celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reminded all the members and contributors of the successful development of the SMBS and it should be an impulse to young colleagues and students to continue the tradition of SMBS with even more success. They should be motivated with the motto of our long-lasting work, written by our Nobel prize laureate for literature, »He who does good, more good is expected from him«.



Lecturers and participants of the 11th EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region and SMBS 60th Anniversary.



Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh and Dr Zorica Šumarac with EFLM President Prof. Mauro Panteghini, IFCC President Prof. Maurizio Ferrari and Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Katherine of Serbia.





Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh delivers the Honorary Diploma to Prof. Simone Zérah



Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh and Dr Zorica Šumarac delivering the Charter of the SMBS to IFCC President Prof. Maurizio Ferrari



Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh and Dr Zorica Šumarac delivering the Charter of the SMBS to EFLM President Prof. Mauro Panteghini



President of the Croatian Society of Medical Biochemists, Prof. Ana-Maria Šimundić delivering a present to Dr. Zorica Šumarac, president of the SMBS